

BRYAN BUILDING SAFETY NOTES

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Travel Tips

There is an excellent website that provides do and don'ts for air travel. <http://safetravel.dot.gov/>. SafeTravel involves more than government regulations, including giving travelers the best advice and expertise of interested parties within the travel industry, as well as within government.

What Building Occupants Can Do

Preventing Indoor Air Quality Problems is a Shared Responsibility

Indoor air quality is a major concern to businesses, building managers, tenants, and employees because it can impact the health, comfort, well being, and productivity of a building's occupants. And since most Americans spend up to 90% of their time indoors (many working in an office environment), the importance of indoor air quality in commercial buildings is increased.

While most buildings do not have severe indoor air quality problems, even well-run buildings can sometimes experience episodes of poor IAQ. Some of the factors may originate from inadequate HVAC design. Some may be solely in the control of building management, such as maintenance of the HVAC system and the amount of outside air being mechanically brought into the building. Others are largely in the control of the building tenants and occupants, such as materials used in renovations and products and furnishings brought into or used in the building by occupants. Some, like cleanliness and general housekeeping of the building, require the cooperation of both the building management as well as all of the individuals who work in the building. For these reasons, indoor air quality is a shared responsibility.

It is also important to keep in mind that many perceived indoor air quality problems are often comfort problems, such as temperature, humidity, or air movement in the space being too low or too high. In addition, many symptoms, such as headaches, can have causes that are not related to factors in the building.

The Good News ...

Even though the factors affecting IAQ can be numerous, most indoor environmental problems can be prevented or corrected easily and inexpensively through common sense and the vigilance of everyone in the building. By becoming knowledgeable about indoor air quality, tenants and occupants are in a good position to help building managers maintain a comfortable and healthy building environment. Work with management any time you:

- Identify or suspect an indoor air problem
- Need cleaning and maintenance service
- Plan to install new office equipment
- Plan for renovations and/or remodeling with a professional interior designer and/or an architect
- Experience leaks, spills, or accidents

Things Everyone in the Building Can Do

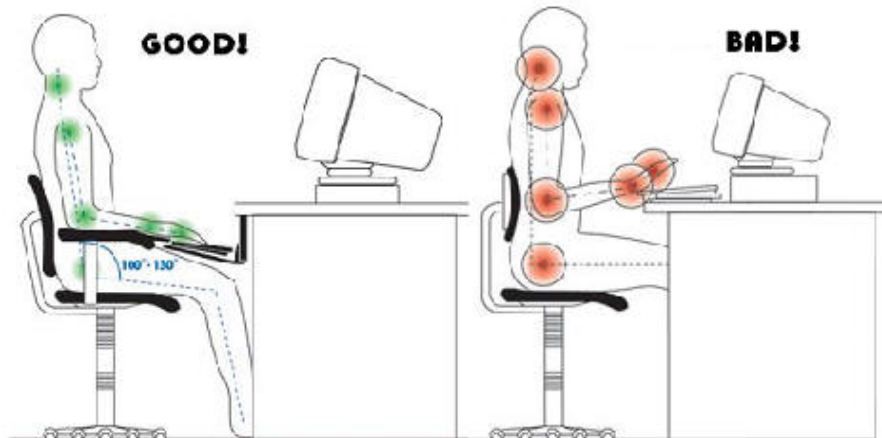
All of the occupants of a building can have a great influence on indoor air quality. Everyday activities like heating food in a microwave or using the photocopier can generate odors and pollutants. By being aware of the indoor air issues, occupants can help prevent problems. Here are some things that occupants can do:

- Do not block air vents or grilles. Even simple modifications done to the air delivery by a space's occupant can affect surrounding offices or suites.
- Make sure computers and other heat-producing equipment is not placed under an HVAC sensor. This can trigger cooling when none is required.
- Comply with the building smoking policy. Environmental tobacco smoke in a building can increase costs for maintaining the ventilation system and for cleaning or replacing smoke-soiled furnishings and materials.
- Clean up all water spills promptly. Water creates a hospitable environment for the growth of micro-organisms such as mold and fungi. Some of these can become airborne and can cause health problems.

See **Air Quality** Page 4

Ergonomic Evaluations

Agency Heads and Supervisors that are requesting Ergonomic Evaluations for their employees must first assist the employee in filling out the "Office Workstation Self Evaluation Checklist". Two weeks after the employee completes the checklist, check to see if any discomforts have decreased. If they have not, forward it to the Risk Management Division, attention Joan Tiearney. Risk Management will contact the Supervisor to set up an evaluation if necessary. The link is: <http://risk.state.nv.us/Ergo%20Self%20Eval.htm>.



Office Workstation Self Evaluation Checklist

Complete this checklist to determine if your workstation is properly set up. If not, use the "4 Steps to Setting Up Your Computer Workstation" guide to help you make adjustments.

Chair:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are your feet supported on the floor or on a footstool?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are your hips against the back of the chair?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the backrest adjusted to support your back?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is your seat long enough and wide enough to support your hips and thighs?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there a 1 to 2 inch gap between the back of your legs and the front of the seat?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If you have armrests, do they allow you to rest your arms at a comfortable and natural height?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Can you pull up close to your desk or keyboard without hitting your armrest?

Keyboard/Pointing Device:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you able to reach your keyboard with your upper arms hanging comfortably and naturally by your sides?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is your pointing device immediately next to and at the same height as your keyboard?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the most frequently used section of the keyboard positioned directly in front of you?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you sitting directly in front of your screen?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Can you view the screen using a slight downward gaze without raising or lowering your chin?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the screen at least an arm's length distance from you?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are your source documents positioned on a stand between the monitor and keyboard, or on a stand close to the monitor?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Can you view the monitor without seeing glare on the screen?

4 Steps to Setting Up Your Computer Workstation

STEP 1: Your Chair

- **Push your hips as far back as they can go in the chair.**
- **Adjust the seat depth** so there is a 1 to 2 inch gap between the back of your legs and the front of the seat
- **Adjust the seat height** so your feet are flat on the floor and your knees equal to, or slightly lower than, your hips.
- **Adjust the back of the chair to a 100°-110° reclined angle.** Make sure your upper and lower back are supported. Use inflatable cushions or small pillows if necessary. If you have an active back mechanism on your chair, use it to make frequent position changes.

Adjust the armrests so that your shoulders are relaxed. If your armrests are in the way, remove them.

STEP 2: Your Keyboard

An articulating keyboard tray can provide optimal positioning of input devices. However, it should accommodate the mouse, provide leg clearance, and have an adjustable height and tilt mechanism. The tray should not push you too far away from other work materials such as your telephone. Bring your most frequently used items as close to you as possible

- **Pull up close to your keyboard.**
- **Position the keyboard directly in front of your body.**
- **Determine what section of the board you use most frequently,** and readjust the keyboard so that section is centered with your body.
- **Adjust the keyboard height** so that your shoulders are relaxed, your elbows are in a slightly open position (100° to 110°), and your wrists and hands are straight.
- **The tilt of your keyboard is dependent upon your sitting position.** Adjust the tilt of your keyboard to maintain a straight wrist position.
- **Wrist rests can help to maintain neutral postures and pad hard surfaces.** However, the wrist rest should only be used to rest the palms of the hands between keystrokes. Resting on the wrist rest while typing is not recommended. Avoid using excessively wide wrist rests, or wrist rests that are higher than the space bar of your keyboard.
- **Place the pointer as close as possible to the keyboard.** Placing it on a slightly inclined surface, or using it on a mouse bridge placed over the 10-keypad, can help to bring it closer.

If you do not have a fully adjustable keyboard tray, you may need to adjust your workstation height, or the height of your chair to get in a comfortable position. If this doesn't work, you may need a different chair or workstation, see your supervisor for assistance. Remember to use a footrest if your feet dangle.

STEP 3: Monitor, Document, and Telephone

Incorrect positioning of the screen and source documents can result in awkward postures. Adjust the monitor and source documents so that your neck is in a neutral and relaxed position.

- **Center the monitor directly in front of you** above your keyboard.
- **Position the top of the monitor screen at seated eye level or slightly below seated eye level.** (If you wear bifocals, lower the monitor to a comfortable reading level.)
- **Place the monitor about an arms length away from you** and then adjust the distance for your vision.
- **Reduce glare by careful positioning of the screen.**

Place screen at right angles to windows

Adjust curtains or blinds as needed

Adjust the vertical screen angle and screen controls to minimize glare from overhead lights

Other techniques to reduce glare include a monitor hood or additional task lighting.

- **Position source documents directly in front of you, between the monitor and the keyboard, using an in-line copy stand.** If there is insufficient space, place source documents on a document holder positioned adjacent to the monitor.
- **Place your telephone within easy reach.** Telephone stands or arms can help.

See Office Checklist Page 4

Good Housekeeping Is a Good Safety Practice

- ✓ Keep aisles, passageways, stairways, and floors clear of tools, materials, boxes, cords, cables, air hoses, and trash.
- ✓ Close drawers.
- ✓ Put tools and materials away when you're not using them.
- ✓ Cover sharp edges of tools.
- ✓ Stack materials carefully, so they won't fall or block sprinkler access.
- ✓ Clean up all spills immediately and properly—or call someone who can.
- ✓ Report any loose or broken flooring or other broken equipment.
- ✓ Avoid keeping food and beverages in the work area.
- ✓ Place all trash in proper containers—closed metal containers for combustible waste.
- ✓ Don't let paper or other combustibles come in contact with lights or electrical equipment.
- ✓ Prevent dirt or grease buildup on machinery and equipment.
- ✓ Smoke only where permitted, and put out smoking materials in ashtrays.
- ✓ Keep flammable liquid containers closed when not in use.
- ✓ Don't place tools or equipment on the edges of shelves or tables.

Indoor Air Quality From Page 1

- Water and maintain office plants properly. Over-watering office plants can encourage the growth of micro-organisms. Under-watering office plants can have an similar effect. Dead or dying plants can serve as food for unwanted biological organisms.
- Do not allow occupants to eat at their desks, and make sure you store food properly. Food attracts pests. Some foods, if left unrefrigerated, can spoil and generate unpleasant odors.
- Dispose of garbage promptly and properly. Ensuring that garbage containers are emptied daily will prevent odors and biological contamination.
- Avoid procedures and products that can cause problems. Many common products used in offices, like solvents, adhesives, cleaners, and pesticides, can give off pollutants and odors, as can office equipment such as copiers, printer, and fax machines.
- Integrate indoor air quality concerns into your purchasing decision. Take steps to reduce exposures to contaminants from cleaning products, and from new furnishings and building materials when odors and chemical emissions are usually highest.
- Work with building management and contractors before you conduct remodeling or renovation.
- Notify your building or facility manager immediately if you suspect an IAQ problem

While indoor air quality issues are often in the control of property management, many can also be caused by tenant or occupant controlled products or activities. For that reason, the issue is a shared one that requires both parties to monitor their activities proactively.

Computer Workstation From Page 3

- **Use headsets and speaker phone** to eliminate cradling the handset.

STEP 4: Pauses and Breaks

Once you have correctly set up your computer workstation use good work habits. No matter how perfect the environment, prolonged, static postures will inhibit blood circulation and take a toll on your body.

- **Use correct posture** when working. Keep moving as much as possible
- **Take short 1-2 minute stretch breaks every 20-30 minutes.**

After each hour of work, take a break or change tasks for at least 5-10 minutes. Always try to get away from your computer during lunch breaks.

- **Avoid eye fatigue by resting and refocusing your eyes periodically.** Look away from the monitor and focus on something in the distance.
- **Rest your eyes by covering them** with your palms for 10-15 seconds.

Protecting Yourself in the Sun

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. *There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans.*

Skin Cancer

Sun exposure at any age can cause skin cancer. Be especially careful in the sun if you burn easily, spend a

lot of time outdoors, or have any of the following physical features:

- Numerous, irregular, or large moles.
- Freckles.
- Fair skin.
- Blond, red, or light brown hair.

Self-Examination

It's important to examine your body monthly because skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured. The most important warning sign is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape, or color during a period of 1 month to 1 or 2 years.

Skin cancers often take the following forms:

- Pale, wax-like, pearly nodules.
- Red, scaly, sharply outlined patches.
- Sores that don't heal.
- Small, mole-like growths—melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer.

If you find such unusual skin changes, see a health care professional immediately.